



Strategic Agenda 2025 - 2028

Approved July 2025

Ella

ELLA SHARP
MUSEUM



Approved by the Board in July 2025, this plan builds upon our core values - education, accessibility, stewardship, innovation, and inspiration - while focusing on four strategic pillars: **Community Engagement, Operational Development and Stewardship, Financial Responsibility, and Emerging Technology.**

Each pillar identifies specific goals, strategies, and tactics that will guide our operations and programs over the next three years. From fostering inclusive community partnerships to strengthening financial sustainability and embracing emerging technologies, the plan positions the museum as a dynamic, accessible, and forward-looking institution.

Key highlights include:

Deepening community trust through inclusive programming, targeted outreach, and expanded volunteer engagement.

Advancing institutional excellence by investing in safety, transparency, and ethical stewardship of our collections and operations.

Ensuring long-term financial health through strategic fundraising, donor engagement, and diversification of revenue.

Enhancing visitor experience and accessibility through innovative use of digital tools, immersive technologies, and sustainable infrastructure.

The Ella Sharp Museum's Strategic Agenda for 2025 - 2028 charts a **bold and thoughtful path forward**, rooted in our mission to **inspire curiosity, foster learning, and strengthen our connection to the greater community**.

This strategic agenda is not only a roadmap for the next three years - it is a foundation for the next 50 years of community service. By aligning our resources and efforts around these shared priorities, Ella Sharp Museum will continue to evolve as a vital and welcoming space where history, art, and learning come to life for all.

Excellence in four key areas is essential to achieving the goals in this plan.

Community Engagement

Strategies will ensure that Ella fosters meaningful connections through inclusive, interactive, and community-driven experiences.

Operational Development & Stewardship

Strategies will ensure sustainable growth through accessible, aesthetically enriching experiences, and accountable operations that uphold the highest standards of excellence.

Emerging Technology

Strategies will ensure Ella embraces emerging technology to enhance storytelling, accessibility, and immersive experiences that inspire and engage our community.

Financial Responsibility

Strategies in this area will ensure long-term sustainability through responsible financial stewardship, strategic growth, and transparent resource management to support our mission and community impact.

The Board and Staff look to evaluate each area in regards to guest satisfaction, engagement, and growth. This document serves as a starting place for the next 50 years of service to the community.

The logo features the word "Ella" in a large, elegant, black cursive script. Below it, the words "ELLA SHARP MUSEUM" are written in a smaller, black, all-caps serif font, separated by a thin horizontal line.

ELLA SHARP
MUSEUM

Mission

We honor Ella Sharp's legacy by creating engaging experiences that inspire curiosity, foster learning, and strengthen our connection to the greater community.

Vision

A community enriched through accessible and transformative experiences in the arts, and history.

Values

The Ella Sharp Museum values:

Education - We provide meaningful, thought-provoking experiences that challenge and inspire lifelong learning.

Accessibility - We embrace the community by offering exhibits, outreach, and programs that reflect a variety of perspectives and diversity.

Stewardship - We uphold the highest standards of ethics, integrity, and accountability, ensuring responsible management of our operations, collections, and financial resources for the benefit of the community.

Innovation - We foster creativity and exploration, embracing new ideas to enhance our public programs and internal operations.

Inspiration - We strive to be an engaging, adaptable, and uplifting place where visitors and staff feel inspired to connect, learn, and grow.

Strategic Pillar: **Community Engagement**

Supported by values of authenticity; empathy; accessibility

Goal: Foster trust through authentic relationships and collaborative partnerships.

Strategy 1: **Cultivate a welcoming, inclusive, and accessible environment that encourages engagement and belonging.**

1.1 “Yes Approach”

Executive Director

- All employee information updated with the “Yes” approach
- Non-solicited feedback
- Solicited feedback from key stakeholders

Employee updates January 2026. Develop and deliver Annual Stakeholder Survey (80% approval rates) in December 2025.

Resources needed: IT Support, Software Applications

1.2 Welcoming Environment

Director of Curatorial Affairs and Director of Facilities

- Facilities audit & review
- Create an Action List
- Develop and deliver Annual Stakeholder Survey
- Smithsonian Guidelines for exhibit interpretation

Audit by November 2025. Action list starting January 2026 and completed by January 2027.

Resources needed: Research, Planning/Scheduling, and Set Up/Display

1.3 Personalized and Custom Experiences

Director of Member & Volunteer Engagement

- Feedback & digital surveys
- Data analytics
- Admissions

Develop and design a 2-year Experience Plan June 2026. Implement 2-Year plan in January 2027.

Resources needed: Marketing, IT Support, Research, and Resource page

1.4 Diverse Communications Plan & Methods

Communications & Marketing

- Ensure positive relationship with donors, members, and guests
- Social Media Data and feedback
- Develop and deliver Annual Stakeholder Survey

Ongoing with annual check-in. Process and baseline data identified January 2026.

Resources needed: Overview of current processes, research, new CRM

Strategic Pillar: Community Engagement

Supported by values of authenticity; empathy; accessibility

Goal: Foster trust through authentic relationships and collaborative partnerships.

Strategy 2: Strengthen visibility and engagement through meaningful partnerships and consistent community presence within and beyond Jackson

2.1 Become Members of the Community

Executive Director

- Strategically attend community events
- Raise # of outreach events and memberships to community organizations
- Community and staff feedback
- Employee evaluations

Ongoing with monthly check-in.

Resources needed: Community calendar, outreach materials

2.2 Maintain Collaborating Partnerships

Executive Director, Events Coordinator, Director of Facilities, and Educational Department

- Increased and continued engagement
- Staff reflection
- Feedback from external partners

Ongoing.

Resources needed: IT Support, Community calendar, Research

2.3 Revamp and restore “Ella’s Friends”

Visitor Services

- Increase # of Volunteers
- Raise Volunteer engagement numbers

January 2026.



Strategic Pillar: Community Engagement

Supported by values of authenticity; empathy; accessibility

Goal: Foster trust through authentic relationships and collaborative partnerships.

Strategy 3: Enhance and expand community outreach through innovative, inclusive, and impact-driven engagement methods.

3.1 Ensure Impactful Community Engagement through presentation & outreach materials

Marketing, Visitor Services, Education, Events, and Curatorial Departments with support from all ESM Staff

- Community feedback on presentation and outreach materials
- Customer Data Platform (CDP) directed goals

Ongoing. Quarterly check-in

Resources needed: IT Support and Research

3.2 Ensure Positive Community Engagement Through Consistent Community Presence

Marketing, Visitor Services, Education, Events, and Curatorial Departments with support from all ESM Staff

- Audit of current community partners & identify new partners
- Staff reflection

Ongoing. Monthly check-in

Resources needed: IT Support, Research, Community Calendar, Create and maintain media connections.



Strategic Pillar: Operational Development & Stewardship

Supported by values of accessibility; aesthetics; accountability; excellence

Goal: Maintain and preserve excellence and public trust.

Strategy 1:

Ensure operational excellence through ethical stewardship, accountability, and a commitment to high-quality standards.

1.1 Model Ethical Behavior and Transparent Communications

Executive Director and Directors

- Reflection and Feedback
- Review and Redevelop Code of Ethics

Ongoing.

Resources needed: Code of Ethics and Research

1.2 Maintain the Highest Standard for Curatorial Procedures

Curatorial and Visitor Services Department, all ESM Staff

- Transparency
- Core documents made public
- Curatorial Code of Ethics

Ongoing.

Resources needed: Code of Ethics and Staff Training

Strategy 2:

Implement proactive security, safety, and preservation measures to protect the facility, collections, and visitors.

2.1 Standardized Closing Procedures

Director of Facilities and Visitor Services

- Staff Feedback

Ongoing. Manual completed by June 2025.

Resources needed: Employee resource manual

2.2 Ensure a Safe and Quality Experience for all Guests and Employees

Curatorial and Events Department, all ESM Staff

- Guest feedback & staff assessment
- Develop an Emergency Plan
- Update and review ESM Handbook

Ongoing. Emergency Plan completed by September 2025.

Resources needed: Adequate Staffing, IT Support

Strategic Pillar: Operational Development & Stewardship

Supported by values of accessibility; aesthetics; accountability; excellence

Goal: Maintain and preserve excellence and public trust.

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Strategy 3: Leverage data-driven decision-making to optimize efficiency, sustainability, and long-term institutional growth.

3.1 Implement Performance Dashboards and Metrics

Executive Director

- Implement Performance Dashboard used for employee evaluations and ESM Board scorecard.

January 2027.

Resources needed: IT Support and new CRM

3.2 Utilize Audience and Stakeholder Insights

Executive Director

- Annual Stakeholder Survey with score of 80% positive feedback

December 2025.



Strategic Pillar: Financial Responsibility

Supported by values of accountability; transparency; stewardship; community consciousness

Goal: Achieve sustainable profitability and maintain institutional assets.

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Strategy 1: Cultivate and strengthen donor and member relationships through strategic engagement, stewardship, and long-term investment in Museum's mission.

1.1 Develop and Implement a Donor Engagement and Growth Strategy

Executive Director and Fund Development Committee

- Increase in new memberships and donors
- Reflected in Development Budget and Goals Met

Quarterly Check-in and Board Report.

Resources needed: Updated databases

1.2 Develop and Implement an Outreach Strategy for Reaching New Members and Donors

Executive Director, Fund Development Committee, Marketing and Communications

- Create and implement outreach strategy

Quarterly Check-in

Resources needed: Past and present donor/member data



Strategic Pillar: Financial Responsibility

Supported by values of accountability; transparency; stewardship; community consciousness

Goal: Achieve sustainable profitability and maintain institutional assets.

Strategy 2: Strategically balance and diversify earned and contributed revenue streams to ensure financial stability and sustainable growth.

1.1 Strategically Find and Apply for Grants and Foundation Opportunities

Executive Director and Fund Development Committee

- Grant report (# of successful applications vs. total # of applications)

Quarterly Check-in and Board Report.

Resources needed: Updated financial documentation, Grant calendar, Streamline shared folder (necessary documents)

1.2 Create Intentional Plan Built on Estate Giving

Executive Director and Fund Development Committee

- Plan developed and implemented

September 2026.

1.3 Revamp the Cupola Society

Executive Director and Fund Development Committee

- Plan developed and implemented
- October 2025.

1.4 Create a Donor Recognition Structure

Executive Director and Fund Development Committee

- Plan developed and implemented

October 2025.



Strategic Pillar: Emerging Technology

Supported by values of resiliency; ethical and authentic practices, adaptability; diversity

Goal: Migrate to the cutting edge of industry standards, while improving accessibility and enhancing the visitor experience

Strategy 1: **Develop and implement a strategic technology plan that enhances accessibility, engagement, and community integration**

1.1 Audit All Digital Platforms and Develop Sustainable Methods

**Marketing & Communications Department
with support from all ESM Staff**

- Tracking community response
- Increased engagement on all platforms

October 2026. Quarterly check-in starting 2027.

Resources needed: Centralized access to media platforms, audience research.

1.2 Audit Physical Technology and Develop Sustainable Methods

**Operations, Marketing, and
Exhibits/Curatorial Departments**

- Visitor engagement
- Technological downtime
- Upgrades and feedback

October 2026. Quarterly check-in starting 2027.

Resources needed: Budget/funding, Software and design support, AV/VR equipment

1.3 Sustainability Through SMART Infrastructure Operations, Marketing, and Exhibits/Curatorial Departments

- Website development
- Community response
- Implement SMART tracking

2025/2026. Ongoing.

Resources needed: Budget/funding, IT Support

Strategic Pillar: Emerging Technology

Supported by values of resiliency; ethical and authentic practices, adaptability; diversity

Goal: Migrate to the cutting edge of industry standards, while improving accessibility and enhancing the visitor experience

Strategy 2: Leverage emerging technology to enhance accessibility and create an inclusive, engaging visitor experience

1.1 Digital and Interactive Tours

Operations, Marketing, and Exhibits/Curatorial Departments

- Research, develop, and implement interactive tours
- Utilize SMART tracking

September 2027.

Resources needed: Budget/funding, Equipment, Online Presence, IT Support

1.2 Implement Best Practices for Online Accessibility

Operations, Marketing, and Exhibits/Curatorial Departments

- Community Feedback

Ongoing.

Resources needed: IT Support, Research

1.3 Redesign and Modernize Web Page

Operations, Marketing, and Exhibits/Curatorial Departments

- Community Response

2026.



Strategic Pillar: Emerging Technology

Supported by values of resiliency; ethical and authentic practices, adaptability; diversity

Goal: Migrate to the cutting edge of industry standards, while improving accessibility and enhancing the visitor experience

Strategy 3: Expand Digital Access to Collections and Programs

1.1 Online Collections Access

Curatorial and Operation Departments

- SMART tracking
- Develop and deliver online Collections System

Ongoing. June 2026.

Resources needed: Budget/funding, Equipment, Cloud-based application, IT Support

1.2 Integrate Interactive and Immersive Technology

to Elevate Learning Spaces

Curatorial, Marketing, and Education/Programming Departments

- Deliver online options for Educational Programming

January 2027.

Resources needed: IT Support

1.3 Redesign and Modernize Web Page

Operations, Marketing, and Exhibits/Curatorial Departments

- Community Response

2026.

